REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Clams 1-6, 8 and 15 are active in the case.

Claim 1 has been amended to delete the phrase added from canceled Claim 7, so that the claim is returned in its original form. Claim 15 has been added to reinstate a claim of the scope of canceled Claim 7. No new matter has been added into the amended claim or new claim.

Corrected drawings are being filed with this response per the Examiner's requirement.

The Examiner is thanked for the courteous interview conducted on April 29, 2003 in which the issues in the case were clarified. The indication of allowable subject matter in Claim 3 is noted with appreciation.

The rejection of Claims 1, 2, 4-6 and 8 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as unpatentable over Albanese et al is traversed.

The Examiner admits that Albanese et al fail to disclose a "molar ratio of ammonia to the sum of oxygen and nitrogen obeys the following relationship: $Y=m\cdot X-a$ wherein: $Y=[NH_3]/[N_2+O_2]$; $X=[O_2]/[N_2+O_2]$; $m=1.25$ to 1.40; and $a = 0.05$ to 0.14".

The equation in present Claim 1 covers a narrow band of starting gas compositions, as exemplified by the boundary lines G1 and G2 in the figure and discussed on pages 7 and 8 of the specification. On page 3 of the Official Action the Examiner extracts arbitrary numbers from the table encompassing columns 3 and 4 in Albanese et al and inserts these arbitrary numbers in Applicants' own equation in order to argue that Applicants' equation in present Claim 1 would be obvious from the table in columns 3 and 4 of Albanese et al.

However, Albanese et al provide no teaching or suggestion in the figure of the reference and the table in columns 3 and 4 as to how to set up the equation of present Claim 1 to arrive at the narrow range of starting gas compositions encompassed in the figure of the present invention and specifically set forth as a limitation in present Claim 1. It is submitted

that the Examiner is using Applicants' own disclosure, i.e., the equation in Figure 1 and working backwards from that starting point and taking arbitrary numbers from the table in columns 3 and 4 of Albanese et al and supplying arbitrary numbers for m and a in order to attempt to meet the range of starting gas compositions encompassed by the equation of present Claim 1. This approach is clearly a case of impermissible hindsight reconstruction of the prior art and, as such, does not meet the requirements to establish a case of *prima facie* obviousness, because there is no teaching or suggestion in Albanese et al of how to derive the equation of present Claim 1. Claims 1, 2, 4-6, 8 and 15 distinguish over Albanese et al.

It is submitted that Claims 1-6, 8 and 15 are allowable and such action is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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